

# Special Session

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	4
<b>Meeting Date</b>	July 24, 2006
<b>Prepared By</b>	Jessie Carpenter for Councilmember Seamens
<b>Reviewed By</b>	Wayne Hobbs Deputy City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Resolution Supporting the House Bill 5680, and Human Rights and Democratic Freedom in Ethiopia
<b>Background</b>	Councilmember Seamens has prepared the attached resolution for Council consideration on Monday, July 24.
<b>Policy</b>	The Takoma Park City Council may take positions on issues of national and international importance.
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	None.
<b>Attachments</b>	Resolution.
<b>Recommendation</b>	Adopt the Resolution.
<b>Special Consideration</b>	

Introduced by: Councilmember Seamens

RESOLUTION #2006-

Supporting House Bill 5680,  
and Human Rights and Democratic Freedom in Ethiopia

Whereas, the people of Ethiopia have suffered many years of natural disasters, diseases, and domestic and regional military conflicts; and

Whereas, past elections run by the multiparty government of Ethiopia have been largely boycotted and judged as not being free or fair; and

Whereas, the election in May 2005 was seen by observers to be relatively competitive, free and fair, although the announced election results were viewed by observers to be questionable, and a number of other election problems were reported; and

Whereas, human rights conditions have significantly deteriorated since the May 2005 election including arrests or killings by the Ethiopian government of journalists and members of minority parties; and

Whereas, the World Bank, United Kingdom, and European Union have called on the Ethiopian government to end the human rights abuses and instill democratic freedom; and

Whereas, many Ethiopian-Americans are concerned about human rights violations in their native country and seek the immediate release of prisoners of conscience in Ethiopia; and

Whereas, the U.S. House of Representatives is considering a Bill to "encourage and facilitate the consolidation of security, human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia;"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, calls on the U.S. House of Representatives to pass House Bill 5680 to encourage and facilitate the consolidation of security, human rights, democracy, and economic freedom in Ethiopia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council calls on the government of Ethiopia to release all political prisoners, including civic leaders, journalists, human right advocates, and attorneys who are all a vital for democracy, and provide government support for human rights, democracy and economic development in Ethiopia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to our Congressional Delegation and to President Bush urging them to support House Bill 5680 and the intent embodied in that Bill.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to the US Ambassador to Ethiopia, with a letter imploring the Ambassador to continue working hard for the release of all political prisoners to minimize the chance of further political unrest in Ethiopia.

Adopted this 24th day of July, 2006.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Jessie Carpenter, City Clerk